

You may know more than you realize

You've learned a lot and have great work experience from working in the military. Some of those skills are just what you need to be a drinking water or wastewater operator.

Experience in water treatment, distribution, reverse osmosis or desalinization, sewage treatment, storage, and pretreatment, are directly applicable skills for a drinking water or wastewater operator.

Reasons for you to become a certified operator

Certified drinking water and certified wastewater jobs offer:

- ◆ Long-term professional employment.
- ◆ Good pay and benefits.
- ◆ On-the-job training and internships.
- ◆ Advancement.
- ◆ Team work and opportunity to work independently.
- ◆ The chance to become highly skilled in areas such as mechanics, electrical work, mathematics, biology and chemistry.

Drinking water and wastewater operators help maintain public and environmental health.

Wastewater operators are the front line workers to ensure water is safe for the public and environment. Operators guarantee this by making sure water their communities use is free of all contaminants before it returns to the environment.

Drinking water operators run equipment to manage the process of producing safe, reliable drinking water. Water operators maintain and repair important water system infrastructure like pipes, pumps, controls and generators that are used to produce water for homes and communities.

For more information

Wastewater Operator Certification Program

Washington Department of Ecology
Contact: Poppy Carre
360-407-6449 or poca461@ecy.wa.gov
ecology.wa.gov/OpCert

Drinking Water Operator Certification

Washington Department of Health
Contact: William Bernier
360-236-3562 or william.bernier@doh.wa.gov
doh.wa.gov/OpCert
Drinking water publications are online at doh.wa.gov/odwpubs.



Career Opportunities for Veterans in the Water Sector



DOH PUB #331-471
June 2017

If you need this publication in an alternative format, call 800.525.0127 (TDD/TTY call 711).
This and other publications are available at www.doh.gov/eph/dw.

Minimum requirements to be a certified operator

Drinking Water (Operator-in-Training)

- ◆ High school diploma or General Education Diploma (GED).
- ◆ Three months operating experience.

Or

- ◆ Three relevant continuing education units (CEU) or college credits.
- ◆ Pass a written exam.

Wastewater (Operator-in-Training)

- ◆ High school diploma or GED.
- ◆ Three months operating experience.

Or

- ◆ Three relevant continuing education units (CEU) or college credits.
- ◆ Pass a written exam.



Training opportunities

Many states offer “in-training” drinking water and wastewater operator certification exams. Passing these exams demonstrates your basic understanding and competency to potential employers. As you advance in your career, there are progressing levels of certification that take into account overall experience.

Water Sector Training

In Washington, five training entities specialize in water/wastewater training:

Evergreen Rural Water of Washington (ERWOW) in Shelton, WA www.erwow.org

Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) offices statewide www.rcac.org

Washington Environmental Training Center (WETRC) at Green River Community College in Auburn, WA www.wetrc.org

Environmental Sciences Department of Water Resources at Spokane Community College in Spokane, WA www.scc.spokane.edu

Environmental Conservation Department at Skagit Valley College in Mount Vernon, WA www.skagit.edu

To learn more about drinking water and wastewater operator career opportunities, visit the following websites:

- ◆ American Water Works Association www.awwa.org
- ◆ Association of Boards of Certification www.abccert.org
- ◆ Pacific Northwest Clean Water Association www.pncwa.org
- ◆ Rural Community Assistance Partnership www.rcac.org
- ◆ Water Environment Federation www.wef.org

Things you can do before leaving the military

- ◆ If you can, get your military experience and training converted to college credits.
- ◆ Get any operating experience in drinking water or wastewater documented by your superiors.
- ◆ Make a declaration of employment for each duty station prior to leaving the station.
- ◆ Save your military evaluations. Many types of experience could be relevant to job opportunities in the water sector.

